

# News Release

# Senator Pete V. Domenici

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUNE 6, 2000

## DOMENICI WELCOMES SUCCESSFUL THEL MISSILE HIT, SAYS IT UNDERSCORES LASER ROLE IN MISSILE DEFENSE

### Congress Considers Senator's \$5.7 Million in Emergency Funding for THEL

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Senator Pete Domenici today welcomed news of a successful Tactical High Energy Laser (THEL) test above White Sands Missile Range, and said the action adds credence to his effort to provide \$5.7 million in new funding for the Army program this year.

The THEL system conducted a successful Single Rocket Shootdown test at WSMR today. Earlier THEL testing thus far has proven the laser's viability against targets, and separate tests demonstrated adequate target recognition and tracking capabilities. However, today's shoot down was the first truly integrated test of THEL tracking, targeting and beam control technologies in an operational setting.

"This THEL success helps demonstrate the viability of missile defense using lasers," Domenici said. "I hope this first and effective test will show members of Congress that this program has great potential and that we should make sure there are adequate resources to continue development and testing of this defense technology."

In May, Domenici gained Senate approval for a \$5.7 million emergency appropriation for THEL this year. The funding was added to a FY2000 defense emergency supplemental package that was passed by the Senate as part of the FY2001 Military Construction Appropriations Bill.

The funding is now pending conference committee negotiations to reconcile differences between House and Senate versions of the emergency supplemental package. The House version does not include the additional THEL funding.

THEL, an important binational program being developed and tested at WSMR, is funded through a cost-share arrangement between Israel and the United States, with the TRW Corp. having also invested a considerable amount in the program.

The U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command (SMDC), TRW, and test support personnel at WSMR have worked to coordinate the full array of planned tests for THEL. Based upon a government cost-to-completion estimate, an additional \$19.9 million is required to successfully complete THEL testing for this fiscal year. Under the cost share arrangements between the United States, Israel, and TRW, an additional U.S. share of \$5.7 million is required. The Israeli share is \$5 million, and TRW's share is \$9.2 million.

Related to THEL funding for next year, Domenici has gained \$15 million in the FY2001 Defense Appropriations Bill for the program. The funding is a rebuff to the administration's budget request that sought no funding for the program. The Defense Appropriations Bill awaits consideration by the full Senate.